

Minnesota State Bar Association
Questionnaire for Judicial Candidates in Statewide Contested Races

1. *What is your full name?* Natalie Elise Hudson
2. *Does your campaign have a website or Facebook page? If so, please list it.*
www.justicehudson.org
3. *List the colleges and law schools you have attended, including your dates of attendance and degrees awarded.* Arizona State University: 1975-1979 (B.A. English); University of Minnesota Law School: 1979-1982 (J.D.).
4. *List where you have been employed since graduation from law school, including dates employed, your position and the nature of your employment responsibilities.* Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services – 1982-1986 (Staff Attorney – Housing Law); Robins, Zelle, Larson & Kaplan – 1986-1989 (Associate – Employment Law/Business Litigation); Hamline University School of Law – 1989-1992 (Dean of Student Affairs); St. Paul City Attorney – 1992-1994 (Chief Legal Officer); Minnesota Attorney General’s Office – 1994-2002 (Criminal Appellate Lawyer/argued appeals before the Court of Appeals and Supreme Court); Minnesota Court of Appeals – 2002-2015 (Judge); Minnesota Supreme Court – 2015-Present (Associate Justice), (Chief Justice – October 2023 – Present.
5. *Have you ever been convicted of a crime or publicly disciplined by a lawyer or judicial standards board? If so, feel free to provide an explanation.* No
6. *What is/was the general nature of your practice? Indicate any areas of practice in which you concentrate or concentrated. (Response limited to 150 words.)* I have been an Appellate Judge/Justice for the last 22 years, hearing and deciding the wide variety of complex cases that come before our appellate courts. As Chief Justice, I oversee the Minnesota Judicial Branch – an organization made up of 322 judges, 2,500 employees with a FY 24/25 budget of \$866M. I lead the Judicial Council, which is the administrative body of the Branch responsible for all policies that govern our state courts. At the Attorney General’s Office, I specialized in criminal appellate work – writing briefs and arguing appeals before the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court. I advised the Mayor and City Council as the St. Paul City Attorney and specialized in Employment Law at Robins. At SMRLS, I specialized in Housing Law, representing tenants in eviction actions.
7. *What percentage of your practice is/was litigation?* 40% at SMRLS; 30% at Robins; 80% (appellate) at the Attorney General’s Office.
8. *Why do you want to be an appellate judge? (Response limited to 150 words.)* Fair and consistent interpretation and administration of law is an essential feature of society. The appellate courts are crucial in creating, refining, and administering precedential interpretation of law for the lower courts, thereby helping to maintain a consistent, fair,

and reliable justice system for our citizens. Being a part of this function is deeply fulfilling.

9. *What qualities do you believe are most important in an appellate judge? Explain how you have demonstrated that you possess those qualities. (Response limited to 250 words.)* An appellate judge must be a critical thinker and have well-developed analytical skills necessary to meaningfully interpret and apply state and federal law. An appellate judge must be professional in their disposition, must be willing to listen to the views of others, must respect precedent and the separation of powers, and have a deep commitment to the rule of law. I have demonstrated these qualities throughout the 22 years I have been an appellate judge. I have authored hundreds of opinions, in every area of law – from complex constitutional criminal and civil cases, to zoning, administrative, and family law matters. I have repeatedly demonstrated the ability to dissect and evaluate complex legal arguments and the ability to engage in nuanced statutory interpretation, while still ensuring that the opinion is accessible to the general public. I value the opinions of my colleagues, and I am always willing to listen to the position of others and if necessary, change my view. I have always been, and continue to be as Chief Justice, a consensus builder – taking divergent views and guiding the court to a single opinion whenever possible.

10. *Why do you believe you are the best candidate for the appellate judge seat? (Response limited to 250 words.)* For over a quarter century, I have been involved in appellate practice as a practitioner and as a jurist and have served on both appellate bodies for the State of Minnesota. I have written hundreds of opinions in nearly every area of law, and I am very experienced in appellate practice and procedure and the overall operation of the Minnesota appellate system. Having served as Chief Justice of the Minnesota Judicial Branch over the last nine months, I also understand the unique administrative responsibilities that make up oversight of the third branch of government. The role of the Chief Justice is broad and wide. In addition to the decisional work, it includes oversight of major policy initiatives like the OneCourt/MN Hearings Initiative which governs remote hearings in our courts, and many, many more. It includes service on the Pardon Board with the Governor and Attorney General. It also includes developing and advocating for the Branch's legislative funding and initiatives – matters that are critical to the Branch's ability to carry out its constitutional responsibilities. I have faithfully done this work, and more, and have devoted my career to serving the citizens of Minnesota.